

Sub 21
23. (New) A protein that is capable of binding to α_2 M and that comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID No 6 or a functional variant thereof.

24. (New) A protein according to claim 23, wherein the functional variant has at least 78% homology to SEQ ID No 6 over at least 30 amino acids.

25. (New) A protein according to claim 24, wherein the functional variant has at least 78% homology to SEQ ID No 6 over at least 100 amino acids.

26. (New) A protein according to claim 23 comprising one or more tandem repeats, wherein the repeated sequence is from 21 to 35 amino acids in length.

27. (New) A protein according to claim 26, wherein the repeated sequence comprises amino acids 59 to 86 of SEQ ID No 6 or a variant thereof that has at least 75% homology to amino acids 59 to 86 of SEQ ID No 6.

28. (New) A protein according to claim 23, wherein the variant is from a *S. pyogenes* strain other than SF370.

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29. (New) A peptide comprising a fragment of at least 6 amino acids in length of a protein that is capable of binding to α_2 M and that comprises the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID No 6 or a functional variant thereof.

30. (New) A peptide according to claim 29 comprising a fragment of at least 15 amino acids in length of the protein of claim 23.

Sub 24
31. (New) A peptide according to claim 30 comprising a fragment of at least 20 amino acids of the protein of claim 23.

32. (New) A peptide according to claim 29 that is capable of generating an immune response against group A streptococcus.

33. (New) A peptide according to claim 29 that binds α_2 M.

34. (New) A peptide according to claim 29, comprising one or more tandem repeats, wherein the repeated sequence is from 21 to 35 amino acids in length.

35. (New) A peptide according to claim 29 comprising amino acids 59 to 86 of SEQ ID No 6 or a variant thereof with at least 75% homology to amino acids 59 to 86 of SEQ ID No 6.

36. (New) A peptide according to claim 35 comprising two or more repeats of amino acids of 59 to 86 of SEQ ID No 6 or of a variant thereof with at least 75% homology to amino acids 59 to 86 of SEQ ID No 6.

37. (New) A peptide according to claim 29 wherein the fragment has at least 78% homology to SEQ ID No 6 over at least 30 amino acids.

38. (New) A peptide according to claim 37, wherein the fragment has at least 78% homology to SEQ ID No 6 over at least 100 amino acids.

39. (New) A protein or peptide that is capable of generating a protective immune response to group A streptococcus that comprises:

- (i) the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID No. 6;
- (ii) a functional variant of (i); or
- (iii) a functional fragment of at least 6 amino acids in length of (i) or (ii).

REMARKS

In the Office Action dated May 23, 2002, the Examiner issued a six-way restriction requirement. In response to the restriction requirement, the Applicants elect Group I (previous claims 1 to 12 and 18 directed to a polypeptide), and in the interest of facilitating prosecution have submitted new claims directed to the invention of Group I as claims 23 -39. Further, as Applicants were also requested to limit the claims to a specific sequence the Applicants elect subject matter relating to SEQ ID No. 6. The new claims have been drafted accordingly.

For the Examiner's convenience, below is a chart that provides the bases for support for each of the new claims:

New Claim(s)	Support in the application as filed
23	previous claim 5
24	page 9, line 31 to page 10, line 1 page 7, line 1 page 8, line 15